

THE NATION'S PRIDE.

Eighteen Thousand Patriotic Americans Witness the Successful Launching of the "Kearsarge" and "Kentucky."

NEWPORT, Va., March 24.—Eighteen thousand persons witnessed the successful launching of the battleships "Kearsarge" and "Kentucky" today. The crowds cheered lustily when the ships left the ways. The christening party was composed of Calvin B. Orcutt, president of the Newport News Ship Building company; Mrs. Herbert Winslow, sponsor for the "Kearsarge" and maids of honor; Miss Christine Bradley, sponsor for the "Kentucky" and maids of honor; Governor Tyler, of Virginia, and state officials of Kentucky; Lieutenant Commander Herbert Winslow, U. S. N., the only surviving son of the captain who commanded the famous old "Kearsarge" in her fight with the "Alabama," members of the House and Senate naval affairs, and other distinguished visitors from Washington. Mrs. Winslow broke a bottle of champagne over the bow of the "Kearsarge" and exclaimed: I christen thee "Kearsarge."

The "Kentucky" ceremony was an exact counterpart of the former exercises. Miss Bradley broke a bottle of water from a spring on the old Lincoln farm, and said: "I christen thee Kentucky." As the vessel started down the ways, several bottles of old Bourbon whisky were hurled against her, by Kentuckians opposed to water christening. Water from a spring on Jefferson Davis' farm was also smashed on the vessels.

At a subsequent banquet, Governor Bradley, of Kentucky, said his people desired the nation to "intervene to prevent further atrocities upon the people of Cuba; and, if investigation should justify, to avenge the death of our sailors, not by demanding indemnity in money, but indemnity in blood."

[There are larger battleships afloat on the ocean than the two sisters, "Kearsarge" and "Kentucky," there are even larger armored cruisers in the British navy, such as the splendid cruisers "Powerful" and "Terrible;" yet it is doubtful whether any prudent naval commander, even leaving out of his calculations that great factor represented by the superb fighting qualities of the American sailor, would care to venture a hostile meeting with one of these steel bulwarks of the sea; for the new American battleships embody in their design and construction the highest development up to this date in offensive and defensive warfare as the great game of naval strife would be played on the coast line of the United States. Into their broad hulls are packed all of the engine power, the armor and the ordnance that the highest scientific ability is able to concentrate in a floating structure that is able to seek a line of operations, a supply of fuel and ammunition and a opportunity to heal wounds received in battle. Larger ships, those of greater draft necessarily, may not enter or attack our ports at fighting range and this consideration was always kept in mind by Chief Constructor Higginson when the "Kearsarge" and "Kentucky" were planned. That is the explanation of the fact—a new one in naval design—that these ships with a displacement of 11,325 tons, draw only 25 feet, 6 inches of water, less than the armored cruisers "New York" and "Brooklyn," which would not combined be equal in combat to one of the battleships. Light draft on heavy displacement is only one of the many valuable qualities of the battleships, though by no means the least. Save the "Indiana" class, they carry the heaviest batteries in accord with modern naval practice, and with primary batteries fully equal to that class, they mount secondary guns in such fashion as to make the combination almost unequalled in naval architecture. The big rifles, four in number, are mounted in two turrets, one sweeping the entire sea from directly ahead, fully half way astern, the other, with equal range, placed so as to command the sea from either bow straight astern. These are of thirteen-inch calibre, yet the British navy now confines its guns to twelve-inch. In inches the difference

seems small, yet the American gun has about 25 per cent. more power.

At this point in the armament of the ships the American designers have embarked in a bold and enterprising experiment, the result of which will be awaited with interest by the whole maritime world. Instead of descending at one move from the heavy primary battery to the small-calibre rapid-fire guns, as is done in the case of cruisers, it has become the custom of naval architects to interpose a battery of medium calibre guns six or eight-inch guns for instance, and these are placed in smaller independent turrets about the ship. It occurred to the American designers that if they could dispense with the weighty and space-consuming machinery attached to these turrets, such as the turning engines and machinery, independent ammunition hoist shafts and the like, much more engine power could be placed in the hull of the ship and much more armor could be carried. They solved the problem by rigidly attaching the smaller turrets, each containing two eight-inch rifles, to the top of the big thirteen-inch turrets. The plan had another advantage than weight-saving. Theoretically, it tended to a terrible concentration of the fire of the ship. Probably the craft does not float that would survive the awful impact from the four guns of one of these combined turrets upon one small section of its hull, and because they are trained in unison their projectiles must strike close together.

With this saving in weight the designers were able to give splendid armor protection to the ships. All of this armor is of Harveyized nickel-steel, of American invention, and the best in the world up to this date, as is shown by the many European efforts to equal it by other processes of manufacture. Moreover, it is skillfully disposed, so as to make every ounce of steel count for the protection of the crew. The big turrets are seventeen inches thick in front, diminishing in thickness to fifteen inches in the rear, where they are less liable to be struck because in action the guns are supposed always to be turned towards the enemy. The smaller turrets above, for a like reason, vary in thickness from eleven to nine inches. To make sure no stray shot strikes the ammunition hoists leading to the magazines to the turrets, the former are enclosed in tubes of hardened steel fifteen inches in thickness. Mounted in this fashion the guns are almost invulnerable, from the eight-inch rifles mounted high in air with good range and capable of piercing the walls of most armored ships at fighting quarters, to the big thirteen-inch guns that can project their armor-piercing shot a dozen miles across the sea.

The combination battery is supplemented by a numerous auxiliary battery of smaller guns perched on every convenient point of the superstructure. All are rapid-fire, or machine guns, for the navy department has profited by the lessons taught in the China-Japan war of the terrible power of guns of this type. About four motions suffice to load, discharge and reload one of these guns, and in rapidity of fire they are equal to three of the ordinary navy breech-loading guns. The largest are five-inch calibre, fourteen in all, sheltered behind six-inch steel walls and separated one from another by two-inch steel walls to minimize the effects of an exploding shell in any compartment. Then there are six-pounders, one-pounders and Gatlings, mainly for the warm reception of hostile torpedo boats or to clear a deck or an open porthole or earthwork. To facilitate this some of the machine guns are placed high in the military tops where they can rain bullets down below. To protect the hull which carries all this offensive power, sixteen-and-a-half inches of armor is placed along the sides, dipping four feet below the water line, and numerous heavy bulkheads are disposed to prevent any shot that may enter from traversing. The engines, the vitals of the ship, are covered by an arched steel deck two and three-quarter inches thick, placed on an angle calculated to deflect and throw upward any projectile.

Under the deck lies 10,000 horse power of boilers, engines and other machinery capable of pushing the vast hull through the water at the rate of at least sixteen knots, a good speed for a freight train on land, and besides there are no less than eighty smaller engines to hoist anchors, pull up boats, drive dynamos and otherwise help the crew. The big turrets swing noiselessly and quickly by electricity, the largest application yet made of electric power in this way, and everywhere in the ship, from winches and ventilators to lighting and telephony, the electric fluid plays a useful part.

The "Kearsarge" and the "Kentucky" are 308 feet in length, 72 feet 5 inches beam

and 23 feet 6 inches draft. They carry normally 410 tons of coal but may take aboard 1,210 tons, and 511 officers, sailors and marines are required to navigate each of them.]

The present complications with Spain, and the necessary movements of our warships, show the imperative demand for the Nicaragua canal. The "Oregon," so the dispatches tell us, has sailed for Peru, and if when she reaches there the news is received that war has broken out between the United States and Spain, she will probably proceed on her way through the straits and join the Atlantic fleet. She will have to run slowly to save coal, and it will be the middle of May before she can reach Key West. Were the Nicaragua canal completed she could cut off 9,000 miles of that voyage, and would reach Key West about the 2nd of April. That canal ought to be constructed, or we should have sufficient warships in both oceans to meet ordinary emergencies.

The "Kentucky" and "Kearsarge," launched at Newport News today, are the first of the fleet of five mighty battleships now building to go into commission. Their keels were laid June 30th, 1896 and their launching within eighteen months of this is a record of which both the navy department and her builders are justly proud. By the terms of the contract they are to be turned over complete to the government by January 2nd, but in case of emergency it is believed they could be made ready for service within four months time.

COL. ROBT. J. INGERSOLL wants a war. He declares that Spain is "virtually dead and gone, wiped out from the map of the nations by her superstitions and bloody tyrannies." He thinks the avenging of the murder of the brave sailors on the "Maine" has been postponed too long; that it should have before this resulted in capturing Havana and reducing its defenses to dust, and thinks that would have promptly followed had the "Maine" been a British ship.

The coldest March experienced over England during the last twenty-five years occurred at the close of a winter which was quite mild, if not milder, than the present season.

The word "hairbreadth" now used for an infinitesimal space, was once a regular measure. It was the width of 16 hairs laid side by side.

Paris has 6,000 policemen; New York has 3,600. The ordinary arrests in New York are 85,000, in Paris 100,000 and in London 150,000.

Oom Paul Krueger's statue at Pretoria is fifty feet high, including that hat.—Chicago News.



ELY'S CREAM BALM is a positive cure. Apply into the nostrils. It is quickly absorbed. 50 cents at Druggists or by mail; samples 10c. by mail. ELY BROTHERS, 50 Warren St., New York City.

The partial loss of the grape crop this year, caused by the heavy rains, is estimated to exceed \$1,000,000. Farmers and vineyards all over the north-west part of the State have suffered. While this is true, it is equally a fact that lost and falling strength may be restored by the persistent systematic use of the great national tonic Hostetter's Stomach Bitters, which renews and tones the activity of the stomach, liver and the bowels, counteracts a tendency to rheumatism and kidney complaint, and prevents malarial disorders. After exhausting diseases have run their course, recovery is greatly accelerated by the use of the Bitters, which improves appetite and imparts renewed vigor to the debilitated physique.

Young James G. Blaine intends to carve out a destiny for himself if he can accomplish it by marrying a sculptor.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

It is announced that Italian experiments on vegetable life with Roentgen rays have shown that the effect is identical with that of sunlight.

Emperor William doesn't need to head a Christian expedition into Palestine to make a holy show of himself. Chicago Record.

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